

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT





UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 4  
ATLANTA FEDERAL CENTER  
61 FORSYTH STREET  
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30303-8960

To Whom It May Concern:

Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Region 4, in cooperation with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Jacksonville District has prepared a Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) on expansion of the Port Everglades Harbor Ocean Dredged Material Disposal Site (ODMDS) offshore Fort Lauderdale, Florida. This document is available to agencies and the public for a 30-day comment period. The draft EA is available online at:

<http://www.epa.gov/region4/water/oceans/sites.html>

or

<http://www.saj.usace.army.mil/About/DivisionsOffices/Planning/EnvironmentalBranch/EnvironmentalDocuments.aspx#Broward>

The draft EA provides the information necessary to evaluate the need and alternatives for expansion of the existing Port Everglades Harbor ODMDS pursuant to Section 102 of the Marine Protection, Research and Sanctuaries Act (MPRSA) of 1972, as amended. The purpose of the ODMDS expansion is to accommodate disposal of dredged material from the planned Port Everglades Harbor expansion project. The draft EA evaluates two alternatives for expansion. Alternative 1 is the environmentally preferred alternative. Although it covers 0.32 square nautical miles (11%) more area than Alternative 2, it is estimated to impact less potential hardbottom within the project area. Additionally, it provides the most operationally favorable alternative by allowing disposal vessels to orient parallel to the strong northerly local currents. Recent modeling has indicated that the existing ODMDS is too small to contain the proposed 6.63 million cubic yards of dredged material associated with the proposed Port Everglades expansion project. All dredged material must meet the environmental criteria established in EPA's Ocean Dumping Regulations. The draft EA contains a draft Site Management and Monitoring Plans (Appendix D). In addition, the draft EA contains a Biological Assessment (Appendix B) in accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act and an Essential Fish Habitat Assessment (Appendix C) in accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.

Comments on the draft EA (including the draft SMMP) must be received by EPA at the address below by October 1, 2013.

U.S. EPA, Region 4  
ATTN: Ms. Jennifer S. Derby, Chief  
Coastal and Ocean Protection Section  
Sam Nunn Atlanta Federal Center  
61 Forsyth Street  
Atlanta, Georgia 30303  
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Your comments will be incorporated during the preparation of the final EA and used in the development of a preliminary determination regarding the potential for significant impacts. EPA intends to concurrently publish our proposed rule for designating the expanded Port Everglades Harbor ODMDS with the publication of the final EA and our preliminary determination. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Mr. Christopher McArthur at (404) 562-9391 or [mcarthur.christopher@epa.gov](mailto:mcarthur.christopher@epa.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "A. Stanley Meiburg", is written over a light blue rectangular background.

A. Stanley Meiburg  
Acting Regional Administrator